DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 431 969 CE 079 001

TITLE	Change Processes in Organizations.
PUB DATE	1999-03-00
NOTE	34p.; In: Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) Conference Proceedings; see CE 078 963.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; *Change Strategies; Human Resources; Morale; Needs; *Organizational Change; *Organizational Climate; Organizational Development; Public Agencies; Quality of Working Life; State Government; Work Attitudes; Work Environment
IDENTIFIERS	High Performance Work Organizations

ABSTRACT

The first of the four papers in this symposium, "The Role of the Survey in the Assessment of an Organization for High Performance Redesign: A Case Study" (Teresa K. Moyers, Oris T. Griffin), looks at how one company used a survey to analyze the way the social system currently is designed and operates. "Thriving on Change: An Organizational Identity Model" (Sheila L. Margolis) reports on an investigation of members' perceptions of organizational identity and how the organization can help members during a merger, and suggested ways for human resource development professionals to facilitate organizational change. "Organizational Change and Transformation: A Multifaith Perspective" (Dorothy A. Marcic, Susanne M. Fest) studies how different religious beliefs potentially have an impact on managerial decision making. "A Nine-Month Follow-up Assessment of a Large Scale Interactive Event Designed to Implement Organizational Change in a State Government Organization" (Dominic G. Kamau, Gary N. McLean) reports of a follow-up study on a state government organization that had employed a large-scale interactive event to implement organizational change after a merger, finding that most of the feelings about the event were negative, except for those of persons in leadership positions. (KC)

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37 **Change Processes in Organizations**

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37-1 The Role of the Survey in the Assessment of an Organization for High Performance Redesign: A Case Study

Teresa K Moyers, Hollister, Inc.

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37-2 Thriving on Change: An Organizational Identity Model

Sheila L. Margolis, Georgia State University

37-3 Organizational Change and Transformation: A Multi-Faith Perspective

Dorothy A. Marcic, Vanderbilt University

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37-4 A Nine-Month Follow-up Assessment of a Large Scale Interactive Event Designed to Implement Organizational Change in a State Government Organization

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The Role of the Survey in the Assessment of an Organization for High Performance Redesign: A Case Study

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Many companies seeking to implement high performance work systems study the interaction and fit of the social and technical systems prior to designing the new organization. This paper looks at how one company utilized a survey instrument to analyze the way the social system currently is designed and operates. The survey was developed, using the Socio-Technical Systems Model, to provide insight into five major areas: Individual Needs, Goal Attainment, Adaptation, Integration, and Long Term Development.

Keywords: High Performance, Communication, Survey for Redesign

The redesign of an organization requires extensive research and analysis of the current operating systems prior to any implementation of change. Hollister Incorporated, with the guidance of their consultants, David W. Miller and Associates, has used the Socio Technical Systems Model to study their organization to identify those areas that are working well and which areas have opportunities for improvement. This paper covers only a small part of the social analysis e.g. the survey, which provided a tremendous amount of information concerning the existing social system, how people communicate, solve problems, make decisions, know and understand goals etc. that was essential to the redesign process. A communication matrix was created that listed the available modes of communication and the key issues and areas that were identified as needing to be communicated to the plant at large (see Table 1). Each method of communication was then rated as either a primary or redundant source of information for each key element. As information was collected, it was analyzed and disseminated per the matrix. The information gathered from the survey was used not only during the redesign phase to develop a better support structure but it was also used to improve the way we communicated the news and information gathered during the entire STS analysis and redesign process.

Literature Review

High performance emerges out of the integration of the social and technical systems: how work is organized, how people are managed, how technology is used, and how all of these are linked to an organization's competitive strategy and culture. Discussions of high performance workplaces often focus on self-managing teams, quality circles, flatter organizational structures, new flexible technologies, innovative compensation schemes, increased training, and continuous improvement. Effectively managing people is an integral part of this process (Gephart, 1995).

Most companies seek to increase productivity and lower costs by improving their processes through innovations in technology but many neglect a very important key asset in their organization: the employees. Employees make an organization a successful high performance organization. Technological advances alone can increase profitability but it is the integration of the technical with the social system that creates the synergistic effect reflected in the performance measures of quality, service and cost.

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Table 1
Communication Matrix

Communication Matrix	Bulletin Boards	Display Case	HPO Info. Center	Library	One – to – One	E – Mail	Plant Meeting	Team Meeting	Mini Meeting	Supervisor & Leads	Mail	Log Books	Training Sessions	Videos	Channel H	Posters	Pay check Handouts	Cafeteria Handouts	Hollister Papers	Celebrations
HPO Work-in-Progress			P				R	P	P	R					R	R		R	R	
Design Team Meeting Schedule			P												R	R				
How People Get Involved			R		P		R	P	P	R	R		R							
Frequently Asked Questions	R		R		P		R	P	P	R									R	
HPO Articles, Books, etc.		R	R	R														R	P	
Individual Needs					P			P	P	P			P							
Plant Goals	R		R		P		P	P	P	P	R	R	R		R				R	P
Customer/Supplier Concerns			R		P		R	P	P	P						R				
Operational Decisions	R		R		P		R	P	P	P		R								
Policy/Procedures	R		R		P		R	R	P	R	R		P	R	R				R	
Training	R		R		P			P		R			P	P		R				
General Information	R		R		R		R	P	R	R	R	R		R	R	R			P	
Employee Feedback					P			P		P										
Rewards & Recognition	R	R	R		P			P	P	P	R				R				P	P
Timelines & Milestones	R	R	R		R		R	R	R	R	R				R					P

Socio-Technical systems (STS) analysis provides an alternative approach to redesigning existing organizations. Socio-Technical systems analysis focuses on problems built into the system and recognizes that even though different people in a specific job will deal with these problems differently, the problems will continue to exist until the system is redesigned. Socio-Technical systems redesign is a creative process whose purpose is to improve the quality of working life of the people in the system and increase the productivity of the system. The key is to expand the roles of people and to increase skill level and decision opportunities so as to create better careers in the workplace by pushing variance control and problem management down to the operating level of the organization.

The social system analysis attempts to examine the human systems of the organization to identify what is working well and what needs to be improved. Individuals bring their unique individual needs to the organization, both personal and professional. The social system analysis examines to what extent these needs are met and what is the resultant quality of working life as perceived by organization members. The analysis also looks at how individuals and groups interact with each other and how the organization interacts with the external environment. The process also tries to identify how the organization adapts to the external factors and how it develops its capabilities to be prepared for future challenges (Miller & Assoc., 1997).

Background

Hollister Incorporated is an employee-owned, independent manufacturer of disposable medical products with three manufacturing facilities located in Ballina, Ireland; Kirksville, Missouri; and Stuarts Draft, Virginia. For more than 75 years, Hollister has been serving healthcare professionals and the people they serve. Hollister corporate headquarters are located in Libertyville, Illinois--forty miles north of downtown Chicago. Hollister products and services are available in over ninety countries on five continents.

The Stuarts Draft facility is centrally located in the rural industrial setting of the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. Four hundred seventy regular full time associates staff three shifts. The shifts are non-rotating, which results in the most senior employees staffing first shift. Seventy-five percent of the population is female with the majority (70%) between the ages of 25 – 40 years old. Only five percent of the population is under 24 years of age; five percent is over 55; the remaining 20% of the population are between 41– 55. The turnover rate is very low within the organization. In 1997, the total turnover rate was 9.5% of which 3.4% was due to terminations for cause or employees quitting. The remaining 6.1% were due to retirements.

Hollister is currently organized very traditionally with a plant manager, five staff managers, twelve supervisors and fourteen leadpeople. However, a redesign project is currently underway that will dramatically alter this structure. The survey data was collected and analyzed to assist in the redesign effort.

Method

There are several ways to describe and measure the effectiveness of a social system. The "As Is" Social Survey, used by the Hollister Design Team, was constructed using resource materials provided by the consulting firm of David W. Miller and Associates (1997) who facilitated and guided the design process. The basic instrument used was a modified version of one adapted from Hackman & Oldham (1975). The survey was designed to provide information about how the plant currently operates. The key areas covered in the survey were the systems for communicating, coordinating, problem solving, decision-making, and training. Questions were also included to cover how well the individual needs of the associates were being met. These questions included topics concerning the culture such as honesty and trust issues, respect and support, feedback and personal growth opportunities as well as how valued people feel within the organization.

The "As Is" Social System Survey was a plantwide survey that had a 92.8% response rate e.g. four hundred thirty six out of four hundred seventy associates completed the survey. Using the GAIL Method (Cherns & Wacker, 1978), questions were asked about goals, adaptation, integration, and long term development. In addition, questions concerning individual needs were included. The demographics of the survey included identifying each department by number and shift (Table 2).

The survey was conducted over a two-week period. Each supervisor was notified of the date and time selected for his/her group and was asked to announce and post the information. Each group was allotted thirty minutes to complete the survey. The times were scheduled directly after each group's break or lunch period and were held in the training rooms in order to emphasize the importance of the data being gathered, to minimize time away from the production floor and to reduce distractions. For all associates on leave of absence, vacation or out sick, a survey was mailed to their homes with a cover letter stating the purpose and importance of their responses. A two-week deadline was placed on gathering the information.

Using Approach, a database computer program, in the operating system of Windows 3.1, a program was created to input all of the information from the surveys. Data were compiled, sorted and graphed to aid in the analysis. All graphs were created using the spreadsheet program, Lotus 1-2-3. The upper and lower control limits were manually chosen to provide a realistic view of the data. Any value above 4.50 (the upper limit) which translates to 87% of the time, was categorized as something working well. Any value below 2.5 (the lower limit) which translates to 37% of the time, was viewed as something that definitely needed attention. Trends, potential problems, and opportunities were then identified from the analysis of the data.

Table 2

Department and Shift Profile

GROUP NAME	DEPT.	SHIFT 1	SHIFT 2	SHIFT 3
Production Mgr. Gr.	810	2	0	0
	871	5	0	1
Human Resources	840	2	0	0
Materials Group	861	14	0	0
Engineering	845	12	1	0
Building & Grounds	855	9	0	0
Shipping	863	16	6	0
Receiving	865	2	1	0
Machine Shop	859	3	1	0
Ident-A-Band	881	13	0	0
Wound Care	891	26	17	0
Skin Barrier	892	45	25	23
Machine Repair	853	13	11	1
Catheter	894	26	21	22
Quality Assurance	899	16	7	3
Weigh & Fill	893	7	0	0
Tape	895	4	0	3
Raw Bag	885	46	30	2
Total Associates	**436**	**261**	**120**	**55**

Measures

The survey consisted of thirty-three questions covering five areas of interest: (1) Individual Needs (2) Goal Attainment (3) Adaptation (4) Integration (5) Long Term Development (Table 3). The questions concerning individual needs attempt to identify the reasons why people would consider leaving the organization. These include being respected, treated fairly, honestly and consistently, receiving feedback and recognition, feeling valued, and feeling a part of the organization (Miller & Assoc., 1997).

Table 3

Question Structure

Question Type	Question Numbers
Individual Needs	1 - 15
Goals	16 - 19
Adaptation	20 - 24
Integration	25 - 28
Long Term Development	29 - 33

Goal Attainment was measured by questions 16 – 19 dealing with if and how the organization's goals and performance are communicated. Adaptation questions (20 – 24) were centered on how the employees learn about important changes, both in their work area as well as in the organization as a whole, which is an indicator of the degree of adaptability of the organization to change. Questions 25 – 28 provided insight into the communication system within the plant – how work is coordinated and communicated (integration). The long term development section of the survey looks at the way work is organized and planned and how employees are trained both for their

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current positions as well as how career development and ongoing training are handled.

Data Analysis/Results

The plant wide survey average (see Figure 1) provides an overall picture of the survey results. There were four questions that rated below the lower limit (21, 26 – 28) all involving the communication system.

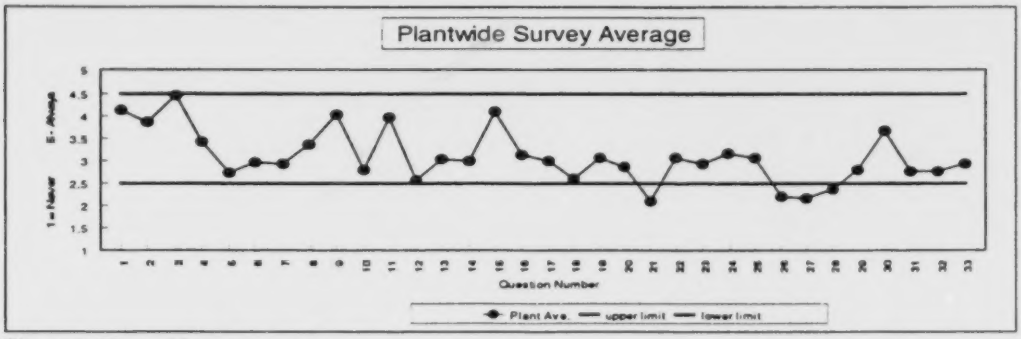

Figure 1. Plantwide survey average.

Associates perceive they do not know what is going on within the plant. A system to link departments and shifts may be needed as well as a process developed and implemented to allow for open and constructive feedback and conflict management. The four highest rated questions (3, 9, 11, and 15) occurred under the Individual Needs section. Associates feel that they are valuable to the company and their jobs are important and that they work in a safe environment. Job security is not a concern; there has been only one small temporary lay-off in the 25-year history of the plant. Personal success may be linked to the company's success due primarily to the lucrative retirement plan that many have taken advantage of after only 20 years of service.

The survey tracked department and shift as well as type of group e.g. exempt, hourly, and salaried non-exempt to see if there were any significant differences among these groups. The exempt and salaried non-exempt groups tracked very closely to each other with both tracking much higher than the hourly group (see Figure 2).

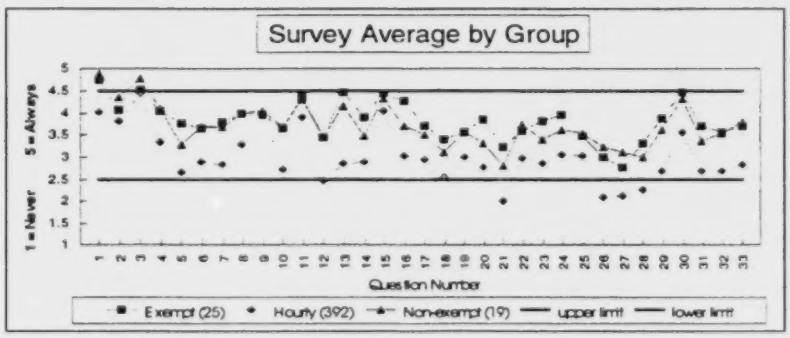

Figure 2. Survey average by group.

This can be explained by the traditional organization of the plant. These groups are comprised of engineers, supervisors, planners, inventory analysts, purchasing agents, and managers. All of the people in these two groups are in constant communication with each other and they attend regular meetings that keep them informed of any problems or new developments throughout the organization. They make most of the decisions that affect the rest of the plant.

The survey average by shift (see Figure 3) can be very misleading. Second shift associates appear to be very informed and satisfied with their jobs and they rated nearly every question higher than either first or third shift. Eighty-five percent of the employees on second shift have less than three years service with the company.

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Employees staffing first and third shifts have on average more than eight years of service. Second shift employees are still being integrated into the work environment and are more concerned with learning to do specific tasks and understanding their responsibilities. Staffing on second shift is less than half of that on first shift which provides a greater opportunity for learning more jobs and allows for more flexibility. Nearly all of the new hires are placed on second shift and they accept the job knowing that it may be a very long time before they will have the opportunity to move to first shift. The supervisor on second shift is much less involved in meetings and therefore spends more time on the floor and is more accessible and available to the associates. Second shift associates feel valued and more connected to each other.

The opportunity to move to other areas in the plant is very limited for those associates on first shift who do not wish to relinquish their first shift hours. Therefore, first shift associates feel stuck in their jobs and have fewer opportunities to change jobs even though they do rotate jobs within their given departments. Third shift associates rated every question lower than their counterparts on the other shifts. They really feel segregated and cut off from the rest of the plant. There is no direct supervision on third shift and only one leadperson for the entire shift. Third shift is only one-fifth the size of first shift and one-half the size of second shift. There is no support staff other than quality assurance technicians available to answer questions or concerns.

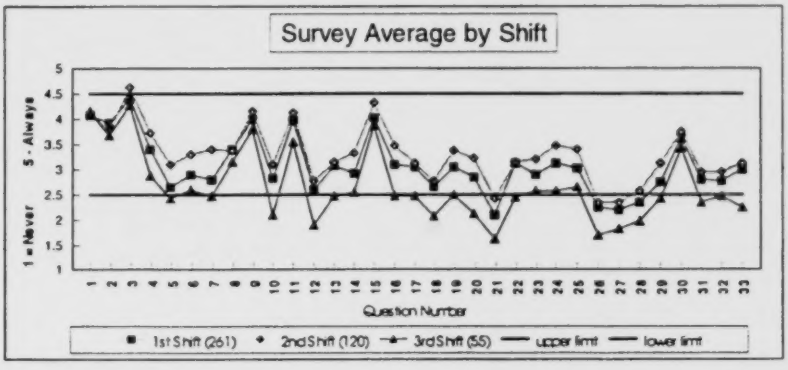

Figure 3. Survey average by shift.

At the time this survey was completed, only one department was implementing self-directed activities, Weigh and Fill. This department is a one-shift, first, operation and overall scored very high in all areas of the survey. They have access to data and the resources necessary to run their day-to-day operations. However, they also are not kept informed of changes and developments in other departments or on other shifts (Figure 4, Questions 21 and 27).

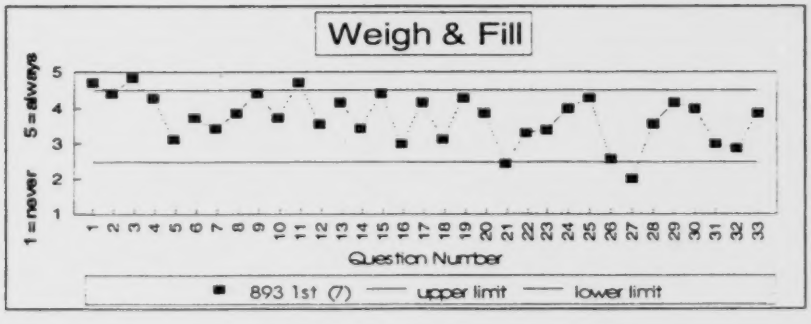

Figure 4. Weigh and fill.

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Survey Conclusions

Results from the survey show that, as a company, the entire communication system needs to be greatly improved. Providing information about the plant in general, better feedback and recognition as well as expanding the training program to include interpersonal and team skills are needed. Safety and job security are not considered problem areas as they were rated very highly.

Overall, there were no surprises gathered from the survey data. All of the deficient areas are typical problem areas identified in a traditional organization: communication problems, lack of knowledge about company, plant, and department goals, lack of knowledge concerning other shifts and departments, lack of support on the off shifts, little personal or career development, lack of involvement in the business.

Actions Taken

As the Design Team continued with the gathering of data throughout the STS process, they attempted to incorporate lessons learned. One of the areas they were able to address immediately was communication. The communication matrix (Table 1) was constructed to identify available methods of communication. The Design Team communicated their progress to the plant regularly using as many types of communication methods as practical. The team also involved as many associates as possible throughout the data gathering process. All of the results from this survey were reported to the management and staff where many have initiated changes to improve the various situations.

The "As Is Social Survey" is only one method used by Hollister Incorporated to study the social system, which in turn was part of the Socio-Technical Systems (STS) Analysis. The information from this survey, combined with the other data gathered using the STS approach, will be used to guide and direct the development and implementation of the redesign plan. The redesign plan will attempt to find the best fit of both the social and technical systems to create a high performance organization.

Conclusions

It is easier to implement changes in organizations that are obviously in trouble. Everyone is aware of the need to change for security, stability and their personal success. However, in successful organizations, the need to change is difficult for the vast majority to comprehend. Why fix something that isn't broken? Hollister is a very successful company. There has been a lot of resistance to what they have nicknamed the outcome, HPO (High Performance Organization). Preparing the culture for change is an ongoing process. Designing changes for improving the work environment, increasing efficiency and reducing costs must be systematic and logical and must look at both the technical and social systems in order to produce high performance results.

Because innovation and adaptation require human commitment, we need to understand how the design of organizations influences the willingness of people to help organizations succeed. By studying the current operating systems within the organization, we can identify those areas that are working well and those that need to be improved. The survey provided specific data that will be used in the redesign process. It is obvious that the social system must be integrated with the technical system and both must be aligned with the organization's goals.

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Thriving on Change: An Organizational Identity Model

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Mergers often contribute to a climate of uncertainty causing members to revise how they view their organization. The purpose of this research was to investigate members' perceptions of organizational identity and understand how the organization can help members during such a change. Findings suggest that the organization's purpose and philosophy constitute organizational identity. Construction of identity is influenced by numerous factors. Suggestions for the HRD professional in facilitating organizational change are provided.

Keywords: Organizational Identity, Organizational Change, Mergers/Acquisitions

Mergers have transformed the landscape of organizations, contributing to an environment of instability (Bastien, Hostager, & Miles, 1996). Even when the merger is an avenue for organizational survival, it has the power to shake up emotions and produce feelings of loss and uncertainty (Mirvis & Marks, 1992; Overmyer Day, 1993; Schweiger, Csiszar, & Napier, 1994). The organization has an identity; it is the essence of the organization, a source of stability and definition for its members, and a basis for action (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1996). With a change in collective status (Albert & Whetten, 1985), members are more aware of these organizational images (Ashforth & Mael, 1996) and are more likely to reflect on their organization's distinctive attributes (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994) than in a more stable period.

This study provided a unique opportunity to examine perceptions of organizational identity during a transformation process in an organization that had chosen a merger as its avenue for change. This research focused on what members described as the essence of the organization.

Theoretical Framework

Because mergers have been and are continuing to be a path for organizational growth and survival (Sikora, 1997), the human response to this dramatic change event was of interest. What emerged from a review of the literature on the human issues in mergers (Buono & Bowditch, 1990; McEntire, 1994; Napier, 1989; Schweiger, Csiszar, & Napier, 1993) were the feelings of loss of identity that often cripple people emotionally not only during the change but also long into the future (Cartwright & Cooper, 1996; McEntire & Bentley, 1996; Nahavandi & Malekzadeh, 1993). Although loss of identity appears to be a significant issue, there has been little research with this focus in an actual merger environment (McEntire, 1994). Also, most of the research that touches on this loss is embedded in varying definitions of organizational identity. A separate body of literature on organizational identity has been evolving using the definition by Albert and Whetten (1985) as its base. The merger literature on loss of identity is lacking this consistent foundation. Because aspects of identity appear to contribute to merger problems, this second body of literature on organizational identity was central to this research.

The literature on organizational identity is theoretical (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1996; Bouchikhi & Kimberly, 1996; Dutton et al., 1994; Dutton & Penner, 1993; Fiol & Kovoor-Misra, 1997; Hatch & Schultz, 1997), and includes a limited but growing body of research (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Elsbach & Kramer, 1996; Foremen, 1995; Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Golden-Biddle & Rao, 1997; Gustafson, 1995; Gustafson & Reger, 1995). Much of this work is based on a noted article by Albert and Whetten (1985) defining the three necessary criteria for organizational identity: central character, distinctiveness, and temporal continuity. "Identity goes to the core of what something *is*, what fundamentally defines that entity" (Ashforth & Mael, 1996, p. 20).

There has been limited research on shared organizational identity (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Gustafson, 1995), what Dutton and Penner (1993) have labeled as "the collective version of organizational identity" (p. 104), from an organizational identity theory perspective. A case study by Dutton and Dukerich (1991) revealed six attributes that members used to characterize the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. All informants described only one of these attributes—a professional organization with a uniquely technical expertise. The remaining five attributes were each suggested by less than half of the informants. Research by Gustafson (1995) also revealed a small number of shared organizational identity attributes; only three organizational identity attributes were shared by a majority of

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the respondents, although two of these may have been biased upward because they were related to elements used in the instrument. The three attributes were attitude toward customer, quality, and culture/values.

Past research has given limited attention to the classification and structure of organizational identity. Gustafson (1995) offered a preliminary classification of organizational identity attributes for organizations in hypercompetitive environments. He suggested that there are a limited number of intangible identity attributes that address "why and how things are done" (p. 180) and many more specific substantive identity attributes that deal with "what things are done" (p. 180). Based on this classification scheme, not all identity components are central, distinctive, and enduring, which differs from the Albert and Whetten (1985) definition. Gustafson suggested further research in this area.

The construction of organizational identity was also a focus of this research. According to Bouchikhi and Kimberly (1996), organizational identity is typically defined at founding and is a product of the motives, skills, experiences, and personality of the founders and the context of the founding. It is a reflection of the powerholders of the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1996). The type of people that a company hires is often influenced by the background and experiences of its founders and their values and vision for the organization (Kimberly & Bouchikhi, 1995). Ashforth and Mael (1996) explained, "There are limits to how far identity claims can deviate from perceptions of either external stakeholders or internal members" (p. 40). This study was designed to further investigate the construction of organizational identity using qualitative methods.

Although there are disagreements about the definition of identity (Barney et al., 1998), the enduring nature of identity within a context of change (Gioia & Thomas, 1996), as well as the need to discuss dimensions of identity (Barney et al., 1998), this identity literature builds on a foundation that contributes to the development of theory. This focus for research is in its infancy, and there is a need to further develop and contribute to organizational identity theory development.

Method

The questions that served as the focus for this research were as follows: (1) How do members describe organizational identity? What attributes are core, distinctive, and enduring as defined by Albert & Whetten (1985)? What attributes are shared? (2) What contributes to a member's perception of organizational identity? (3) How can the organization support its members during a merger? These questions lend themselves to investigation through a qualitative approach (Albert, 1998).

Using an inductive and emerging process, this qualitative case study provided an opportunity to examine a bounded system to uncover insiders' perceptions of organizational identity within the context of a merger experience. An in-depth examination of one organization's response to these issues was the focus of this research. This particular case offered a unique setting because the organization was using a merger for the purposes of losing identity in an effort to remove the stigma attached to its name. It was a contemporary event where phenomena and context were interwoven. The results of the data gathering produced a rich description of the complexities of the situation, revealed through many sources, over a six-month period.

Context of the Study

The setting for this research was a company that I shall label as Company A. Company A was a public company in the business of commercial air transportation. This company offered low-fare, passenger air service. Company A was extremely profitable and growing until its accident. This was followed by a massive reduction in service and a furlough of employees. Scheduled service resumed, but losses continued to accumulate. In an effort to regain its profitability, the airline tried to attract customers back to the company. After continuing declines in profits, the company announced a merger. This merger was specifically targeted as the best vehicle for transforming the company's identity that had been damaged as a result of intense and unrelenting negative media exposure since the accident. Two months prior to the official merger, the company enacted a name change that would be consistent with the upcoming merger.

Data collection began after the merger was announced, continued through the time of the identity change, and was completed a couple of months after the merger went into effect, totaling a six-month period. The timing of this research coincided with heightened emotions about issues of identity in this organization. Attitudes and comments of interviewees were reflective of the point in time of the interview.

1. The participant was an employee of Company A.
2. The participant had been employed at Company A prior to the accident. This criterion was chosen predominantly because of the enduring nature of identity. In order for employees to assess whether or not attributes were enduring, they needed to have experience with the company over a period of time. The first 31 employees met this criterion. The remaining five interviewees were selected specifically because they were "new" (six months or less in employment) to determine if there was a significant difference in their perceptions. These employees could be part-time or full-time employees. The decision to expand the sample was made after completing the 31 interviews. As explained by Miles and Huberman (1994), "Samples in qualitative studies are usually not wholly prespecified, but can evolve once fieldwork begins. Initial choices of informants lead you to similar and different ones" (p. 27).
3. The various functional groups in the organization—pilots, in-flight, maintenance, and reservations—were fairly equally represented in the sample: five pilots, six in-flight, five maintenance, and six reservations. A larger number of customer service employees, 14, were interviewed because that category consisted of several subgroups: ticketing, gate, baggage, ramp, transfer, and operations employees. This was an effort to achieve purposeful random sampling (Patton, 1990). Using a process that enabled the selection of members from each functional group, I was able to use a sample of 36, yet increase the credibility of the results.

In addition to these 36 interviews, I talked with numerous employees in informal, non-taped conversations. Notes from these were included as memos.

In my second round of interviews which concentrated on mini-tour questions, I began by interviewing my key informant. Then, after further analysis of all data, I conducted 15 additional interviews. Ten of these interviews were with employees included in the initial round of interviews, two from each functional area. Five of the 15 interviews were with employees who I had not previously interviewed. Thus, for this research, I formally interviewed 42 employees of Company A; ten of those employees were interviewed during both the initial interview period and the later follow-up round of interviews.

Data Collection

The purpose of this research was to understand what employees perceived as being core, distinctive, and enduring about their organization. The interview guide was used for each interview. The guide was modified as new issues emerged. Using a semi-structured interview process, I was able to efficiently use the time allotted, and I had the flexibility to follow leads that emerged in the interview.

A second data source was observations. Observations took place in the natural setting where I was able to experience firsthand life in this organization. Approximately 21 hours were dedicated to observing activities in Company A.

A third data source was documents. Company printed materials consisted of annual reports, press releases, brochures, promotions, advertisements, and flight-related documentation. Numerous documents from the newspapers and magazines were also available.

Opportunities to observe and review physical artifacts were particularly critical in this research. Because this study focused on identity during a merger, it was quite revealing how the company logo was handled before and after the name change. Data from interviews, observations, and artifacts were coded using the NUD*IST software.

Data Analysis

Data collection and data analysis are iterative, tightly interwoven processes. Using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) while coding data, it is critical that one also compares data with previous data coded in both the same and different groups. Then, through a complex analytical process of deductive and inductive thinking, the researcher not only relates subcategories to a broader category in a set of relationships but also connects these relationships to data. The process of proposing and verifying patterns against data, produces patterns that are grounded in data.

A later stage of analysis involves identifying the essence of the story revealed through the data and analytically formulating the story line by relating other categories to the core category. This is a complex integration process that relates categories in ways that can produce theory that is grounded in the research data.

Establishing Rigor for the Inquiry

This study was conducted using techniques to support the trustworthiness of the findings. This research allowed prolonged engagement because the data collection was spread over six months, totaling 85 hours in the field.

Triangulation can be carried out through the use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories (Denzin, 1970). I triangulated the data using multiple and different sources and methods. This research involved multiple sources because I gathered data from over 42 different employees in several functional groups of the organization. Multiple methods involved my use of interviews, observations, documents, and physical artifacts in the collection of data.

Peer debriefing is an opportunity to probe for biases in the researcher's thinking. A frame interview was conducted prior to interviewing, and throughout the research, I periodically posed questions to peers.

Negative case analysis was used in efforts to rethink themes in response to exceptions that might not fit one's thinking. The importance of dealing with negative evidence was central to establishing credibility. Throughout my data collection and analysis, I consciously identified exceptions and followed up on them to enhance my understanding of the meaning behind the exception and its impact on the themes that I felt were emerging.

Although some state that "the general rule of thumb here is to transcribe only as much as is needed" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 30), I chose to transcribe the initial 36 interviews to ensure that all interview data were preserved and checked by each interviewee, enhancing credibility through member checks. Member checks were critical opportunities to have those who provided data also sign off on the accuracy of that data. In order to check the accuracy of transcriptions and their consistency with the overall feelings of the person interviewed, I mailed a copy of the transcription of each interview to that interviewee and requested that they sign off on its accuracy or make changes where needed. I waited to analyze the interview data in the NUD*IST software until I received these responses.

Member checks also can involve taking tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are reasonable. In two functional areas, I met with a manager or director and reviewed how I was interpreting data. This was an excellent opportunity to get feedback and also to pose follow-up questions for my own clarification. I also met with the key informant after coding most of my data in order to present tentative findings and get his reaction. Finally, during my mini-tour interviews, I asked 15 additional members for feedback on my interpretations.

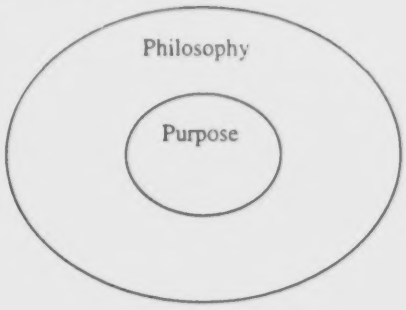
The audit trail is the collection of records of raw data, analysis, and process, as well as any other documentation from the research. A record of such detail allows someone other than the researcher to make a determination if the analysis and interpretation are supported by the data. I maintained an audit trail throughout the study. All interview transcriptions, audiotapes, observation notes, memos, documentation, and coding results were stored in an organized manner. Also, NUD*IST maintained rawfiles and coding results.

Results

How Do Members Describe Organizational Identity? What Attributes Are Shared?

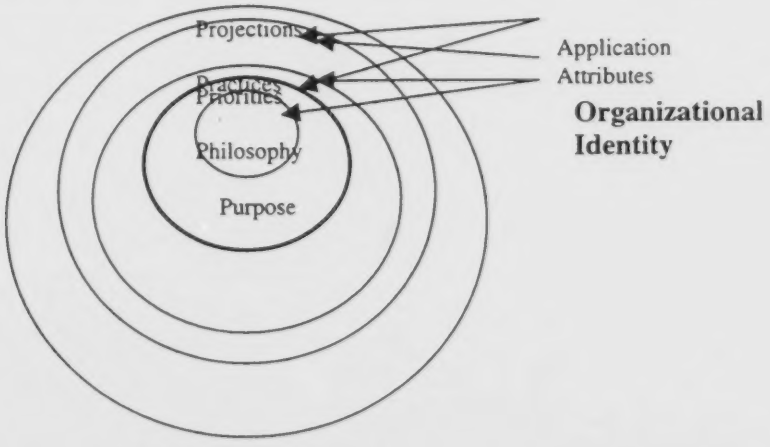
Data revealed that a small number of organizational identity attributes constitute organizational identity. The findings of this research suggest that organizational identity is composed of a purpose and a philosophy. The purpose is the organization's fundamental reason for being in business (not to be defined as making money). An enduring purpose is stated broadly and usually benefits society. The philosophy is the distinctive framework and guiding spirit for how members do that business. This unique philosophy is perceived by members as the special way members do business that sets them apart from others. These two components, shown in Figure 1, are organizational identity as viewed by its members. It is the basis for what members do at work and how they do it. Because this is the core and essence of the organization and the foundation and framework for action, it is the heart and soul of the organization.

Figure 1. Components of Organizational Identity



Surrounding these organizational identity components are priorities, practices, and projections of the organization. These application attributes are what outsiders see and what insiders do naturally if their behavior is inherently aligned with the identity. An organization typically has priorities or standards for action that are more enduring although they are not organizational identity. Priorities are the values that support achieving the organization's purpose and are consistent with its distinctive philosophy. These priorities are a direct application of the purpose and distinctive philosophy to work. Outside of those more enduring attributes are internal and external practices and features that fluctuate with the needs of the organization in its attempts to be competitive as well as projections or images of the organization that are a reflection of the organization to the public. These images, although extremely important to the organization, are also not part of organizational identity. Although these are the aspects of the organization that are most visible to the public, they are typically symbols used by the organization to influence impressions. Together, organizational identity and the application attributes are the organization's attributes. Figure 2 illustrates the structure of organizational attributes.

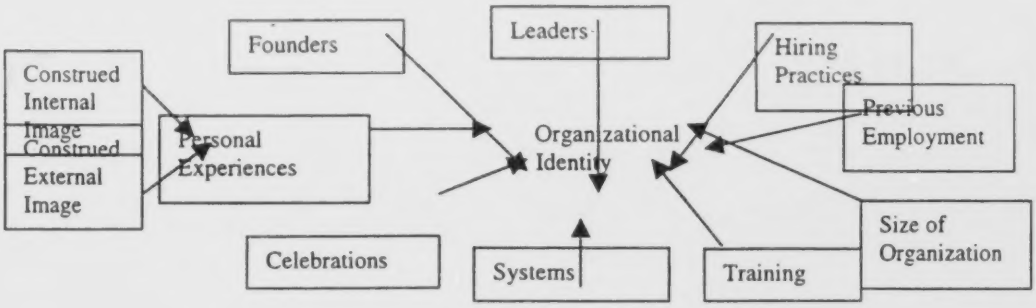
Figure 2. Structure of Organizational Attributes



What Contributes to a Member's Perception of Organizational Identity?

Findings indicate that organizational identity is a product of multiple elements, as illustrated in Figure 3. Based on this research, the following have contributed to the way this organization constructed its organizational identity: founders and leaders, hiring practices, previous employment of organizational members, organizational size, training, systems, celebrations, and personal experiences. Personal experiences are influenced not only by what a member sees and does related to work but also by what a member believes others inside and outside the organization say and think about the organization, their construed internal and external images.

Figure 3. Construction of Organizational Identity



The consistency in how these factors support organizational identity can impact the organization. Fragmented activities that do not contribute to the preservation of organizational identity can be quite damaging to the organization. The factors that helped construct identity are also the vehicles for maintaining or changing that identity.

How Can the Organization Support its Members During a Merger?

In addition to members' concerns about the future of the organization, they have other needs during such a major change. Timely, regular, and congruent communications are critical for relieving uncertainty. Such communications provide information and demonstrate that the employees are important to management and to the success of the organization. Face-to-face meetings with the leadership show that the leader cares about the people and that they can trust that leader with their futures.

Stability during such a change can be achieved by clarifying a member's status of employment as well as the status of the new organization's identity and plans for the future. This gives members an anchor to support them through the change, giving them knowledge of what is constant and direction and insight into their future.

Symbols can be used in both expressive and instrumental roles to represent the new organization and promote identification with it. Such a process may include a ceremony to close one stage in the organization's life and celebrations to welcome the new. The management of such symbols could be consciously planned in order to help members make the emotional change from what they have been a part of to the new entity.

Conclusions and Implications

This research contributes to the development of organizational identity theory in the aspects of structure, content, sharing, and construction of identity. This contribution to theory development can influence knowledge that impacts the organizational development component of HRD practice. It is suggested that future research on the human aspects of mergers be framed within theory and research in organizational identity so that it contributes to theory development and a better understanding of the processes that support such changes in an organization.

This research on organizational identity has several implications for practice, particularly for human resource development (HRD) professionals (see Figure 4).

First, HRD professionals should be integral participants in planning and implementing mergers and other organizational change events. Because the primary focus of management is directed at financial and strategic decisions, those in key decision-making roles are sometimes insensitive to the impact of the change on the people in the organization. And this impact can produce negative outcomes that can influence merger success. There must be someone in a leadership role who listens to and represents the voice of the employees. In addition, for humanitarian reasons, there needs to be an advocate for how this change will impact the people so that appropriate actions can be taken to make transitions and change more livable for the workforce. The HRD professional has the obligation to serve in this role and, as a team member, participate in planning and executing these activities.

During organizational changes, such as a merger, the HRD professional could concentrate efforts on those levers that will contribute to satisfying human needs and enhancing productivity. Based on the findings of this research, this effort involves targeting four distinct areas.

First, the HRD professional can help in monitoring and facilitating communications. This role involves ensuring that timely and accurate communication systems are in place throughout the change process. These communications are necessary during normal times but are critical during times of uncertainty and transition. An array of techniques can be used including face-to-face meetings with leadership, memos, telephone hot lines, and newsletters. The HRD professional must be aware of how well these communications are serving their purpose and monitor information flow so that unnecessary uncertainty does not deter productivity.

Second, the HRD professional can support leadership in defining and translating organizational identity. This involves ensuring that leadership is clear on the organizational identity attributes of the merged organization and then ensuring that members understand that identity and evaluate whether they fit with it. When organization members have clarity about the essence of the organization and if they feel comfortable and connected with it, there is less uncertainty because they have an anchor of stability, even in an environment of change. The HRD professional could work with the leadership to clarify changes and facilitate processes so that those changes can be smoothly adopted in the organization.

Third is the focus on future organizational images. The HRD professional can work with the leadership in determining how to clarify direction for the future of the organization and then clearly communicate that to all employees in a way that sparks enthusiasm among members.

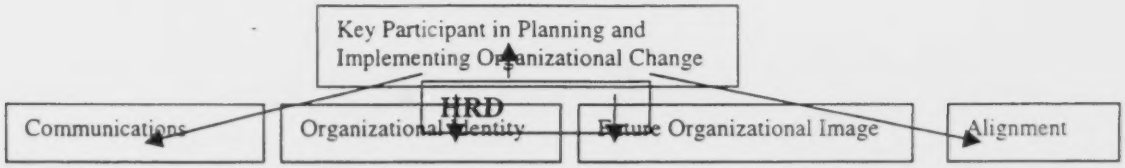
And, fourth is the role of supporting alignment. The HRD professional must work with others to be alert to misalignments, create new alignments, and strengthen current alignments within the organization so that attributes of the organization are congruent with the organizational identity and future image. The levers for constructing organizational identity offer a focus for managing alignment. If those elements that construct identity do not consistently reinforce the organizational identity, then such misalignments must be corrected. These elements are also sources for creating new alignments and strengthening current alignments. Also, these levers should be harmonious with the vision of the organization so that all actions are consistent not only with who they are as an organization but also where they are going.

The HRD professional could also work with members to determine if organizational attributes support organizational identity. Because there is a funnel effect for organizational attributes, the HRD professional could help others to be alert to any misalignments in those attributes.

In times of transition, members need the stability of knowing what is not changing, and they need the challenge of knowing where they are moving. With this basic information, members can better travel through transitions and maintain a sense of balance within the change. With the anchors of information, organizational identity, and future organizational image, each member can contribute to organizational success by aligning their actions to what is important to the organization.

Thus, the HRD professional has a critical role to play in enhancing the capacity of an organization to not only survive change but also thrive on it. As a change agent, the HRD professional must promote communications, guide leadership in defining and translating organizational identity and a vision for the future, and advocate the continuous creation of alignments within the organization to both the identity and the organization's strategic goals. The challenge is to grow and develop an organization in ways that reinforce and adhere to the stabilizing identity core yet simultaneously motivates members to be flexible in all other aspects of the organization. The HRD professional must take on this critical role in facilitating change and thus enhancing the organization's capacity for competitiveness.

Figure 4. Roles of HRD Professionals in Facilitating Organizational Change



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Organizational Change and Transformation: A Multifaith Perspective

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The literature related to organizational change reflects a paradigm shift in that for the last decade it has increasingly included a focus on spiritual and religious dimensions. Among the reasons are increased anxiety due to high levels of global macro-change, as well as post-modern thinking seeking to integrate dimensions beyond the purely scientific. As the faith dimension gains new legitimacy, we must seek to understand how different religious beliefs potentially imprint on managerial decision-making.

Keywords: Organizational Change, Multi-Faith, Spirituality

During the last decade we have seen a proliferation of references to spirit in the workplace, (Chappell, 1993; Conger, 1994; Hawley, 1993), spiritually grounded leadership (Lee & Zemke, 1993; Covey,1992; Bolman and Deal, 1995; Daft and Lengel, 1998; McCarthy, 1996; Neal, 1997), values based management (Marcic, 1997; Kueng, 1998; Miller, 1996; Toney, 1998) in the literature related to organizational change. In addition, the manufacturing and sales of Christian-based products has grown to a stunning $4 billion in 1998 in the United States alone (Marketplace, NPR, 1998). Independent watchdog organizations such as Transparency International are dedicated to un-covering, containing and eradicating corruption in the civil society as well as the private sector. In 1993 in Chicago, the Parliament of the World Religions proclaimed the principles of a Global Ethic, which provided the guidelines for principles of a global business ethic. (Kueng, 1993, and 1998).

What are the reasons for this recent paradigm shift, for the inclusion of the spiritual and religious dimensions in the way we debate organizational and business change? Several reasons are commonly suggested:

1. We are currently in the midst of high rates of global macro-change. High rates of change tend to destabilize systems. Anxiety rises in response. This anxiety needs to be managed. One way is to seek guidance in what is familiar and authoritative, subsequently; many turn to scripture and faithstories. " It is common for people to wring their hands and wonder: how can scripture help us?" (Doug Knight, personal communication, 1998).
2. The age of modernity, with its focus on reasoned, scientific thinking ushered in the rise of secular humanism and the rejection of anything that could not be quantified or empirically proven. Post-modern thinking not only follows the swinging of the pendulum in the opposite direction, but also attempts a marriage between scientific and mystical, spiritualistic thinking, acknowledging the dialectic process of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. This marriage has gained much legitimacy from the insights of quantum physics. (Capra, 1975). Wheatley, a management consultant, states: "The mechanistic image of the world is a very deep image, planted at subterranean depths in most of us. But it doesn't help us any longer. Our own search for new ways of understanding has led us to philosophers, scientists, poets, novelists, spiritual teachers, colleagues, audiences and each other. We keep exploring what we can see when we look at life and organizations using different images." (Wheatley, 1996, pg. 1)

As the faith dimension gains new legitimacy, it seems apropos to explore how faith could possibly imprint, consciously or unconsciously, on daily decision-making processes of business leaders as they steer their organizations through an ever-changing world. By including the multi-faith perspective, we are acknowledging both the unity and diversity of the market place in this global village.

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Conceptual Framework

Change leaders and consultants are sometimes hampered by an insufficient understanding of how deeply held beliefs and values impact individual reactions to the change process. It is impossible to understand the worlds of art history, literature and politics without understanding the impact of religion on these fields, similarly, this is true for the study of organizational change. In multinational companies, Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Jews or Baha'is may work together, each operating from their respective frame of religious reference. Failure to incorporate this dimension will hamper many communication and problems-solving collaborative efforts. Once we understand the faith dimension and its impact on leadership and decision-making more fully, efforts at organizational change will become more effective. This will not only affect organizational well being, but also our ability to conduct business across cultural and religious borders.

Marcic (1997) has written extensively on the importance of balancing the five dimensions of work in the pursuit of organizational change. The five dimensions are as follows:

Physical

Concerned with physical life issues, such as buildings, equipment, comfort, safety, and adequate pay. Questions to ask are: Does your company operate mostly in the black? Are you in continuous financial crises? *Do you have the resources to pay your employees decently? Are compensation differentials between top and bottom excessively large? Increasing? Is there a high turnover rate for employees? Are the places of work (factories, offices) clean, comfortable, well kept, and adequately furnished? Is the equipment modern, efficient, and safe?

Intellectual

Includes the collective intelligence of employees plus their continuing drive for further development and learning, as well as abilities to effectively use available resources, to plan productively, and to be on the cutting edge. Questions to ask are: Do your engineers, technicians, or others keep up with cutting-edge technology? Do you spend adequate resources to send people for continuing education or to important professional conferences? Is spending on continuing education as a percentage of sales increasing? Are employees able to get reference materials, books, journals, and magazines that will help them learn more about their work and the environment? Do you reward employees who continue to learn? Are people happy to learn (rather than having to be coerced)? Do other organizations respect the knowledge of your employees? Do you respect the knowledge of your employees? Do employees often lack the necessary competence to complete projects adequately and on time? *

Emotional

Involves the interpersonal work environment, how well people get along with each other and how effectively they can be a team. Research shows that effective teams usually need members to be concerned with the process skills of support, listening, positive feedback, and lack of defensiveness, all of which require members with mature emotional development. Questions to ask: Do there seem to be high levels of job satisfaction? Do people enjoy working with each other? Do employees like one another? Are there a disproportionate number of problems with depression, alcoholism, and frequent, even violent, outbursts? *In meetings, do people behave defensively or with power plays? * Are people afraid to bring up in meetings what they really feel? "Is there frequent concern about " not upsetting the boss"? *

Volitional

The desire or will to change for the better. We may know that some other behavior would be healthier but we may lack the will to change it. One psychiatrist wrote that the hardest thing for his patients was not to change but to decide to change. Once the will was there, change was relatively easy. Questions to ask: Is there a willingness to look at new ways of doing things? Do you rarely hear "It won't work" or "That's impossible to do"? Is there a high level of energy on new projects? Do workers put energy into maintaining the status quo? * Are new programs met with many complaints and much resistance? *

Spiritual

Concerned with moral issues, such as justice and respect, and working toward empathy. Understands each member to be a unique human being, a sacred soul, with dignity. Questions to ask: Is there an acceptance and assumption of integrity among coworkers and bosses? Do people trust on another? Do they trust management? Do employees feel exploited or treated unjustly? * Do customers expect and get a quality product? Is cynicism common among employees? * Do people joyfully help one another?

Is there a lot of backbiting? * Are there political fights? Political intrigues? Political posturing? * Is there an openness of communication that depends on a deep level of trust and commitment? Is there a unity of "theory" and "practice" (i.e., do managers practice what they preach)? Can groups discuss problems and handle conflict in a competent and dignified manner? Is there a "spirit" of service to one another, to clients, to suppliers?

Note: * indicates negative scoring
From: Marcic, D. (1997), p. 40-41

The World Religions

The existence of nine to twelve world religions is commonly suggested. Of those, Islam and Christianity make up half of the world's population. Knowledge of Hinduism is essential to understanding modern Asia and the cultural heritage of its people living in Europe and America. The Bahai Faith is a relatively young, but growing religion, which maintains that there is a basic unity of all religions. Due to space and time constraints, we have chosen to highlight three religions, Hinduism, Baha'i Faith, and Christianity, and to examine their possible impact on organizational change. However, further study for the review of all world religions is indicated.

Hinduism

Hinduism is perhaps the oldest, most complex and diverse of all the world religions. It is the source for three other religions: Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism (which is a combination of religious features of Islam and Hinduism), but has eventually absorbed distinctive features of those religions into mainstream Hindu thought. (Hopfe, 1998) According to Capra (1991), Hinduism is "... a large and complex socio-religious organism consisting of innumerable sects, cults and philosophical systems and involving various rituals, ceremonies and spiritual disciplines, as well as the worship of countless gods and goddesses. " (p.85) The spiritual sources of Hinduism are numerous and complex. consisting of :

1. The four Vedas, the oldest sacred books; the law of Manu, the moral and ethical law which provides the roots for many social and religious traditions which characterize modern Hinduism, including the varna, or caste system.

   For the Brahmanas, (priests) he created teaching, studying, sacrifice, officiating at sacrifice, giving gifts, and accepting gifts.

   For the Kshatriya, (warriors), he created in short the protection of people, giving gifts, performing sacrifices, studying and nonattachment to sense pleasure.

   For the Vaishya, (traders) he created the protection of cattle, charity, performance of sacrifices, studying, trading, lending on interest, and agriculture.

   The Lord created only one profession for the Shudra (manual workers): service without envy of the above three castes. (The Law of Manu, 1:88-91)

2. The Bhagavad Gita, India's most favorite religious text that is essentially and epic poem. The teachings inherent in the Gita are many, but Hopfe (1998) suggests the following as the main ones:
   - to perform the duty of one's caste
   - to be open to a variety of religious expression, such as asceticism, meditation, devotion to and worship of gods, obedience to caste rules
   - to believe that Vishnu is a god who loves human beings: "For whenever the law of righteousness withers away and lawlessness arises, then do I generate myself on earth." (Bhagavad Gita, IV:7)
   -

The goal of Hinduism is liberation from karma, the Sanskrit word from a root, which means "to do or act", and samsara, which means, "to wander across". According to Hindu belief, "one is bound to life in ignorance and pain, living over and over again through countless generations. Release from life comes when there is true knowledge of the illusion of life. 'By knowing God, man is freed form all bonds.'" (Hopfe, 1998, p.90) This is a long and difficult process, which requires much study: " Arise, awake, go to the sages and learn. The wise say that the path is sharp like the edge of a razor, hard to walk on, and difficult to obtain". (Katha-Upanishad, I.14)

Spiritual and mental development is achieved through the practice of yoga meditation, which focuses of freeing the mind from anger, lust, hatred, and greed. According to the Yoga Sutra, there are eight steps, which involve:

- vow of restraint against harming living creatures and unchastity
- attempting to achieve internal control, calmness, and equanimity
- learning and practicing bodily postures
- breath control
- control of the senses by shutting out the outside world
- extreme concentration on a single object
- seeking to achieve meditation
- seeking to achieve trance, becoming one with Brahman. (Hopfe, 1998, p. 105)

The concept of time is seen as moving endlessly through various cycles. At the beginning of a cycle, there is peace, abundance, and morality. Then the world begins to decay, famine, wars and general immorality become the rule. Finally, the world is destroyed. When one cycle of time is completed, the world dissolves and all souls depart into suspended being. After a period of calm, a new cycle begins and the souls are reborn in new bodies (Hopfe, 1998).

Like all religions, Hindus struggle with adjusting to the age of modernity. In the past, " people were taught to accept their lot in life and not complain, in that the next life might be better. If problems became so severe that one could not endure them, there was always the alternative of life as an ascetic." (Hopfe, 1998, p. 115)

Baha'i Faith

All the prophets of god proclaim the same faith.
Bahaullah

In 1863, the son of one of the most distinguished families in Persia revealed to his followers that he was the messiah and assumed the name of Bahaullah—"the Glory of God". His writings form the basis of the Baha'i doctrines and teachings:

- the oneness of the entire human race
- independent search after truth, unfettered by superstition, tradition, or imitation
- basic unity of all religions
- all forms of prejudice, - religious, racial, class, national, are to be condemned. " Religion should unite all hearts and cause wars and disputes to vanish from the face of the earth; it should give birth to spirituality, and bring light and life to every soul. If religion becomes a cause for dislike, hatred and division, it would be better to be without it... Any religion which is not a cause of love and unity is no religion." (J.E. Esslemont, Baha'llah and the New Era, 1976, p.6)
- harmony must exist between religion and science.
- equality between men and women, "Humanity is like a bird with its two wings—the one is male, the other female. Unless both wings are strong and impelled by some common force, the bird cannot fly heavenwards. According to the spirit of this age, women must advance and fulfill their mission in all departments of life, becoming equal to men. (Ibid., p. 154)
- compulsory education as a necessary condition for world peace and stability.
- universal language
- abolition of extremes of wealth and poverty
- a world tribunal for the adjudication of disputes among nations
- everyone should perform some form of work in the spirit of service: "It is enjoined on every one of you to engage in some occupation—some art, trade, or the like. We have made this—your occupation—identical with the worship of God, the true One. (Bahaullah, Glad Tidings.)
- Justice should be glorified as the ruling principle in human society and religion for the protection of all people and nations.

- the establishment of a permanent and universal peace should be the supreme goal of humankind. (Thirteen principles from Public Information Department, National Baha'i Headquarters, 112 Linden Avenue. Wilmette, IL 60091)

According to Baha'i beliefs, heaven and hell are conditions of the soul, which is eternal and in continuous progress. "When the soul is close to God and God's purposes, that is heaven, when the soul is distant from God, that is hell" (Hopfe, 1998, p. 402) " In creation there is no evil; all is good. Certain qualities and natures innate in some men and apparently blameworthy are not so in reality." (Abdul Baha, 1964, p. 250) One of the most important aspects of Baha'i life is that all of life should be lived in the spirit of prayer, this applies to work, thoughts, actions, relationships.

> Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of trust of thy neighbor and look upon him with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, and admonisher to the rich, an answerer to the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of the pledge. Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech. Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all men. Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression. Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive. Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring. Be an ornament to the countenance of truth, a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue, a dew to the soil of the human heart, an ark on the ocean of knowledge, a sun in the heaven of bounty, a gem on the diadem of wisdom, a shining light in the firmament of thy generation, a fruit upon the tree of humility." (Bahaullah, 1952, p. 96)

Christianity

Jesus said to him, " I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."
John, 14:6

With an estimated number of 1.783.660.000, in 1991, one third of the World's population is identified in some way with Christianity, as the largest religion in the world. (Hopfe, 1998). Christianity grew out of Judaism with the event of Jesus of Nazareth and the belief that he was the savior of humankind. Thus, Christianity incorporates both the story of the Jews, as God's chosen people, in the Old Testament, as well as accounts of Jesus' life and teachings by his disciples in the New Testament. Major elements of the Old Testament are comprised in the ten commandments, which constitute the laws which adherents are held to obey:

1. I am the Lord your God, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make any graven image.
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
4. Remember the sabbath day, keep it holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. You shall not kill.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's property.

(Summarized by Hopfe, 1998, p. 265,)

It is often suggested that the God of the Old Testament is one of wrath and judgment, who requires strict adherence to the his laws, while the God of the New Testament is one of love, forgiveness and compassion, as exemplified by the Beatitudes from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount:

> Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thurst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted and the prophets who were before you. (Summarized in Hopfe, 1998, p. 306)

Currently, the numbers of affiliates are declining in Europe, remaining stable in the United States, but are growing in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The two most popular and controversial issues in modern Christianity are Liberation Theology, which focuses on issues of social and economic justice for the poor and oppressed on the one hand, and fundamentalism on the other hand, which combats all liberalizing trends in American culture. Fundamentalists believe that the Bible needs to be read and understood literally, that it needs to be defended against modern scientific and philosophical thought. (Hopfe, 1998) However, there are some basic issues, which underlie all Christianity:

- Are humans sinful?
- Can they be redeemed and saved through God's love?
- There is only one life on earth, but is there life after death?

Marcic's Five Dimensions of Work and the Three Religions:

Based on the above examination of religious teaching and principles, the following model emerges:

Physical/Material Dimension

1. Hindu = low, asceticism, inevitability of cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, non-attachment to sense pleasures.
2. Baha'i Faith = high, abolition of extremes of wealth and poverty, " *be generous in prosperity*".
3. Christianity = high for liberation theology with focus on alleviating poverty and increasing social justice; low for traditional theologies with focus on sacrifice, redemption and afterlife.

Intellectual Dimension

1. Hindu = low, eastern focus on mystical aspects, "illusion of life", " one is bound to life in ignorance", learning and studying does not focus on acquisition and creation of new knowledge, but on alignment with universal laws and principles.
2. Baha'i Faith = high, independent search after truth, unfettered by superstition, tradition, or intimidation, freedom from prejudice, creation of harmony between religion and science, compulsory education.
3. Christianity = low, Old Testament stresses obedience and loyalty to law, not critical evaluation and innovation and continual improvement. New Testament stresses humility and service to the poor.

Emotional Dimension

4. Hindu = low, not an issue in sacred texts, except for acceptance of suffering as the basic condition of life, goal is to free oneself from emotions and the restraints they create, rather than an exploration and acceptance of emotions as an integral part of life. This involves freeing the mind from anger, lust, hatred and greed.
5. Baha'i Faith = high, focus on harmony and unity between people, religion should unite all hearts, if it becomes a cause for dislike, hatred or division, it would be better without it. Focus on awareness of self and self-improvement.
6. Christian = low, focus on suppression of negative emotions such as greed, lust, and envy which, in their inevitable occurrence, are either punished of forgiven by God. Attempt to transcend self.

Volitional Dimension

1. Hindu = high, disciplined pursuit of meditative practices.
2. Baha'i Faith = high, focus on justice and equality between people, races and gender.
3. Christianity = high, focus on commitment to laws and virtues.

Spiritual Dimension

1. Hindu = high, permeates every aspect of life.
2. Baha'i Faith = high, work is a form of worship.
3. Christianity = medium, spirituality is confined to private, as opposed to the public domain of work, duality of Western culture.

Discussion

The above model is based on selections of sacred texts of the three religions which have been examined, as well as on interviews with adherents to these religions. While the model serves as a conceptual framework for further, more extensive study, it is in itself, at this stage, untested. It is our hope, however, that it will stimulate processes along all five dimensions, which were previously discussed. Along the physical dimension, we hope that managers will begin to consider this often-neglected area by developing an awareness of the reasons for this neglect. Regarding the intellectual dimension, we hope to encourage discourse about the ideas presented. Concerning the emotional dimension, we would like to acknowledge the potential for controversy, but hope that through increased awareness of self and others, understanding and acceptance of differences, connectedness between faith groups and cultures can be fostered. True to the volitional dimension, we hope that this paper catalyzes interest and the willingness to look at old concepts in new ways. And finally, regarding the spiritual dimension, we hope to have presented compelling arguments for the importance of including this dimension in the study of organizational change. Additionally, we wish to point out that we are well aware of the fact that culture and religion are continuously impacting and shaping each other, and that we are in no way attempting to separate the two. Since this paper constitutes work in progress, we are inviting feedback, criticism, suggestions and additions.

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A Nine-Month Follow-up Assessment of a Large Scale Interactive Event Designed to Implement Organizational Change in a State Government Organization

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A follow-up study was conducted on a state government organization that had employed a large scale interactive event (LSIE) to implement organizational change after a merger. Much information about the organization was collected during the LSIE. Some changes resulted from the LSIE, but some of the changes had been planned before the event. Feelings about the LSIE were largely negative except for those in leadership positions. HRD professionals may benefit from this study's recommendations for improving how LSIEs are conducted.

Keywords: OD, Change, Systems

Leaders in all kinds of organizations have to deal with change. Change occurs for many reasons, including technology, globalization of the economy, and changes in demographics (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991; Nutt & Backoff, 1994). State services have to deal with the same economic, political, social, and technological forces (Menefee, 1997). Managers often seek help from organization development (OD) consultants for help in implementing and maintaining change. OD consultants are constantly looking for innovations to cope with change and to implement change efficiently and effectively.

Recently, OD consultants have devised new methods of implementing changes that are aimed at shortening the time it takes to effect change by focusing on the entire system rather than on individuals or groups of individuals. As observed by Bunker and Alban (1992b):

> In organization development (OD) practice we have been impressed and excited by what appears to be a new type of social innovation occurring all around us. We are speaking of several different types of work with whole systems that is (sic.) emerging in a variety of forms. (p. 473)

In this study, whole system means the entire organization, including all departments, the relationships that exist between the departments, and the environment in which it operates. The environment includes (but is not limited to) consumers of its services. One way of implementing change is the use of Large Scale Interactive Events (LSIEs). These events are attended by as many as 1,500 people (Sullivan, 1997), all meeting in one place for a two- to three-day period. In such an event, participation is extended to all possible stakeholders--employees, shareholders, customers, and suppliers.

Background of the Study

Working with the whole system in the implementation of change appears to have begun with the work of Emery and Trist in Britain in the late 1950s and early 1960s (Purser, Cabana, Emery, & Emery, 1997). They referred to their work as Search Conferences. The work of Rensis Likert in the 1950's on survey research and feedback is also supportive of the idea of participative organizations (Rothwell, Sullivan, & McLean, 1995). Before then, OD interventions had targeted individuals or departments, resulting in gradual manifestation of change in organizations. Since the 1970s, the use of LSIEs has grown phenomenally (Bunker & Alban, 1992b). This is evidenced by the increasing number of OD consultants making reports of having used various types of LSIEs.

Purposes of the Study

As with all organizations, state government organizations find themselves having to cope with rapid changes. These changes may result from new regulations, dwindling funding, or political crisis. A state government organization in Minnesota held a three-day LSIE to implement organizational changes after a legislative mandate to merge

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organizations. A case study was conducted by the researchers during and one month after the LSIE (Kamau & McLean, 1998).
This is a follow-up study with the following purposes:

1. To validate the research findings of the first phase of the case study on the use of a Large Scale Interactive Event to institute change in the state government organization.
2. To document the feelings of the research participants approximately nine months after the LSIE.
3. To document the changes since the LSIE was held.
4. To solicit advice about holding LSIEs, from the perspective of a nine-month interlude.

Need for the Study

There has been a great deal of activity in using LSIEs in the public and private sectors (Nutt & Backoff, 1994; Purser et al., 1997; Sullivan, 1997). Bunker and Alban (1992b) alluded to OD practice being atheoretical today and called for interaction between theory and practice. Research should be conducted to address that imbalance where practice is not supported by theory.

An earlier study by the current researchers (Kamau & McLean, 1998) involved observation of the planning process for the LSIE, observation of the LSIE, and interviews with 22 participants one month after the LSIE. It was found that there was free interaction during the LSIE and high expectations of what could be achieved, but there was a slow pace of implementation of the resulting recommendations. It was also found that there was minimal individual and organizational change immediately after the event. Persons had volunteered to participate in the follow-up activities, but there was little action during the first month after the LSIE. There also existed consultant-client incongruencies over the duties and responsibilities of the consultants regarding the follow-up activities.

There is need for this study to confirm or refute the findings of the earlier study and to identify the feelings of the research participants nine months after the LSIE as a next step in a longitudinal study of the effects of an LSIE.

Significance of the Study

Organizations are systems, yet they are built on individuals--individual chief executive officers, individual managers, individual employees, individual shareholders, and so forth. Thus, it is important to study organizational change as a whole, while also exploring the experiences of individuals experiencing change in that organization. Much of the writing on LSIEs is based on reports of what happens during the event. The earlier Kamau and McLean (1998) study reported on the planning for the event, the feelings of participants about the event, and the changes that followed. This study was intended to validate the earlier findings, but, more important, to identify participant reactions and what happens nine months after the event, as part of a broader longitudinal study about the effects of LSIES.

Research Questions

The central question for this research was: Reflecting back nine months, how did the LSIE influence organizational change? The questions in this phase of the research were:

a. Comment on the summary of the findings of the first phase of the research.
b. What are your feelings now concerning the large group interactive event?
c. What changes have occurred in the organization since the LSIE?
d. How do you feel about those changes?
e. If there were another large group interactive event, what advice would you give to the organizers?
f. What final comments would you like to add?

Constraints of the Study

This case study, as with all case studies, involved participants from one organization experiencing the same LSIE. Their experiences could well be very different from experiences in other LSIEs and in other organizations. Thus, this study focuses specifically on this LSIE and this organization, without any intent to generalize more broadly. Further, as in any use of interviews, the interviewer is necessarily imposed into the study, both in influencing the responses and in analyzing transcripts.

Literature Review

There has been a recent influx of LSIEs aimed at working with a whole organization to institute change. Such interventions use various names: Search Conference, Future Search, Multisearch, Future Search Conference, Conference Model, Simu-Real, Open Space Technology, Appreciative Inquiry, Work Out, Fishbowl, Real Time Strategic Change, Large Scale Interactive Events (Brigham, 1996; Klein, 1992; Purser et al., 1997; Sorensen, Gironda, Head, & Larsen, 1996; Weisbord & Janoff, 1995).

Characteristics of LSIEs

The primary strategy utilized by all of these variations is the involvement of large groups meeting in one place for two or three days. LSIEs are based on the principles of small groups (Dannemiller & Jacobs, 1992; Emery, 1992), though the number of people in the groups could be very large, ranging from as few as forty to over two thousand, all meeting in one place for two to three days. There is, however, no agreement about the minimum or maximum number of participants (Dannemiller & Jacobs, 1992; Gilmore & Barnett, 1992; Purser et al., 1997; Sullivan, 1997). Some OD consultants utilizing this strategy suggest a minimum of 100 and others mention 300. There appears to be no claims as to the maximum number of participants, nor any extant research to support a claim of an optimal number.

A second characteristic is that LSIEs target the whole system as opposed to dealing with a single department or a group of persons (Bunker & Alban, 1992b). Thus, each small group in an LSIE is usually made up of persons from different departments and levels. This is referred to as max-mix in the jargon of LSIEs (Sorensen, 1996).

Third, LSIEs are democratic (Emery, 1992; Sorensen et al., 1996). Each person is given an opportunity to air her or his opinions. However, it is unlikely that the short time of the event will allow for a truly democratic atmosphere.

A fourth characteristic is increased commitment to change (Axelrod, 1992). If a person is a party to a decision, she or he is likely to be more committed to that decision.

Another stated characteristic is that LSIEs have greater speeds of implementing change (Axelrod, 1992). As LSIEs involve all parties affected by the change, commitment is achieved quickly, thereby reducing the time to implement changes.

A sixth characteristic is the development of working relationships that go beyond departments. As persons interact, they develop working relationships that would not have been possible without the LSIE (Bunker & Alban, 1992a).

Finally, LSIEs are interactive in nature (Dannemiller & Jacobs, 1992). Interventions are designed to allow interaction among persons of different departments and levels in an organization.

Other characteristics include consensus, collaboration, and shared ownership of decisions.

Concerns about LSIEs

Purser et al. (1997) have expressed their concerns about the number of participants in LSIEs:

> We suspect that these large group events might be useful for enhancing information sharing across boundaries, but we would be hard pressed to believe that the quality, depth of dialogue, and solidity of joint agreements around long-term purposes could be equivalent to a group of 35-40 participants which is the upper limit in a Search Conference. (p. 48)

While the authors are advocating for search conferences, it is easy to be sympathetic with their position. The large numbers of people and the compressed time for deliberations raise concerns for us as well. Might an LSIE turn out to be like a political rally rather than an effective tool for change?

There is a possibility of planning committees to fail to design an event that will serve the needs of the participants and their organization. Emery (1992), commenting on this possibility, wrote:

> All this is predicated on early and thorough planning and design that again involves understanding of the genotypical design principles. Until this under-standing becomes widespread through cooperative work, management committees will continue to design camels instead of race horses. (p. 532)

Emery was referring to management committees that institute fast changes in organizations using LSIEs.

Another concern related to LSIEs is the possibility of the "illusion of participation" dilemma (DeVogel, Sullivan, McLean, & Rothwell, 1995). An illusion of participation may be created when decisions are not actually made at the event but at another venue by different persons. It is possible that participants will not chart any change but may be used to "rubber stamp" decisions reached by a handful of individuals (say, top management). Bunker and Alban (1992a), for example, observed:

> The large group event is primarily an interactive planning event. When it comes time to make decisions, those with responsibility in the organization must take their decision-making roles again even if that simply means blessing what has already been done. (p. 585)

However, the decision-maker may decline to implement decisions reached in an LSIE.

It is evident from the literature reviewed that there are many OD consultants who employ various types of large scale interactive events in their intervention work. As long as practicing OD consultants continue to develop different intervention strategies, researchers will have to study the interventions (LSIE in this case) to add theory to improve practice. Knowledge about LSIEs will enrich OD theory and practice. Research about LSIEs is needed to confirm their benefits or allay the concerns raised about them.

Research Methodology

This case study is evaluation research utilizing phenomenology. Van Manen (1990) stated that "phenomenology must describe what is given to us in immediate experience without being obstructed by pre-conceptions and theoretical notions" (p. 184). This research was designed to collect accounts of persons who participated in an LSIE. Streb (1984) identified three stages in phenomenological study: making judgments, asserting the judgments made, and thinking about empirical categories. The researchers have described in detail the experiences and reflections of the participants, leadership of the state government organization, and the OD consultants involved in the LSIE (Kamau & McLean, 1998).

Research Design

The research was a case study of one state government organization headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota. The research involved interviewing 21 of the 22 participants in the earlier study. The other research participant who would have been interviewed had left the organization. These interviews captured the participants' perceptions of and feelings about the event approximately nine months after the LSIE. While an interview guide was developed, the interviews were largely unstructured, with the participants being allowed to make uninterrupted responses.

Instrumentation and Validation

The study was designed from an interpretive perspective. Its validity is built on agreement between the researchers and the participants on the themes emerging from the discussions.

Analysis

Tape-recorded interviews were transcribed and hard copies made. A thematic analysis was made from the interviews and observations of the LSIE. The frequency with which a theme was repeated by the research participants gave the importance attached to the theme by the research participants. The eloquence of how the theme was put by the research participants was also important. Dominant themes were identified, summarized, fed back to participants, and then revised, as needed.

Comments about Earlier Research Findings

The research participants were given a copy of the results of the first study. Then researchers read a summary of the findings to the research participants. Their reactions were recorded as a validation of the earlier research study findings.

Findings

The results of the analyses of the transcripts follow.

Earlier Research Findings

All research participants agreed that the findings in the first study presented a true picture of the situation as it was one month after the event. One research participant said, "You hit it right on the nose." Another research participant said, "I think, in general, I would be inclined to agree with those statements." One participant pointed out that there was a max-mix table during the event that had six occupants, and occasionally it had fewer than six members during the LSIE. Another point concerned the hiring of an officer specifically to deal with the follow-up activities. It was nearly two months before the person could take office. Other than these concerns of omission, the research findings were validated by the research participants.

Changes Since the LSIE

There were some changes nine months after the LSIE. One research participant cautioned that the color of the sky is still blue and not purple even though changes have occurred. The changes that have occurred were the wearing of name tags, a receptionist at the entrance, establishment of intranet pages, "open days" for sections of the state agency (so people in other sections can visit and see what is done there), and a commitment to move into a healthier building before the end of the year. One research participant stated:

> There have been some groups working, and they have actually made some advances to the various needs we expressed down there. I look at some of the small things that have happened as very beneficial. There are not many of those but some.

Another said:

> Well, I have seen some changes. One of the things that comes to my mind is that each section had to have an open house. We had an open house. It was a very good turnout. So I have seen that part of it. Let's see here; name tags, we've got our name tags. They're really trying to implement, but it is a slow process.

Receptionist

In order for the agency to serve its customers better, it was suggested during the LSIE that there should be a receptionist to give directions to customers. This had been implemented by the time of the second round of interviews. One research participant thought that the changes that have occurred, including the receptionist, have been cosmetic.

Name Tags

In order for the agency to serve the customer better, it had been decided that name tags be worn. These have been made. Some employees display them on their chests. Others do not wear them (reasons for not wearing were not sought by the researchers). The introduction of name tags was as a result of the LSIE. The staff in the field office that the researchers visited did not have name tags. The name tags were also referred to as cosmetic by the same respondent quoted above. This is what he said:

> I do not think they made an effort to respond to the things that came out of the meeting. Like I mentioned before, the name tags, things of that nature which are cosmetic on the surface...

Intranet Pages

Before the LSIE, information about the agency was available on the internet. It continues to be available there. However, there is information that needs to be available within the agency only because of the security of the information. Because of the need to inform more people, and at the same time maintain security, the technology department responded with the development of intranet. Different intranet pages (available only to those in the agency) have been developed. The development of intranet was as a result of the information collected during the LSIE.

Commitment to Move

The current facilities for the agency have been condemned as an unhealthy environment. There is now commitment (lease agreement signed) to move into another, healthier building. Some research participants looked forward to moving to the new address. Others expressed concern about increased commute time, the customers that they serve, and office space--cubicles instead of solid walls. One participant said:

> We will be moving from what used to have offices to cubicle type arrangements. I have a feeling that there is going to be a lot of adjustment from a personal level in terms of noise level and proximity with other people. (but added) There are those who say that it might lead to a more open communication and better interaction.

The organization would have moved to a new location with or without the LSIE. However, some research participants think that the LSIE accelerated the movement.

Feelings about the LSIE

Feelings about the large scale interactive event were varied with participants expressing both positive and negative feelings as depicted by one research participant who stated:

> I have mixed feelings. I guess first of all my negative feelings are there was a lot of time that was taken away from the workplace; therefore, it should have produced more than it has. The positive side of it was it was the chance to communicate with co-workers in a different location, and find out different working environments and what they are like.

The participants acknowledged that some changes had occurred as a result of the LSIE but added that some changes would have come anyway. Moving to a new address is one of the most significant changes. It was intimated that it would have happened with or without the LSIE. However, some changes were as a result of the deliberations at the LSIE.

The research participants reported that there was a notable absence of visibility of some key persons in the organization. They believed that more would have been achieved if more of the executive team were more visible along with the one person responsible for planning and implementing the organizational change. They also said that the management layer may have been less committed to the changes. It is this management layer that would not be affected by political changes. Therefore, had these people been spearheading the organizational changes, then more would have been done. This is not to say that changes have not occurred, but they have not been extensive.

Advice about the LSIE

The research participants thought that the LSIE was best suited for delivery of information. It was least suited for strategic planning. The most repeated concern was the length of time it took--three days. Most research participants were concerned that three days were too long for their customers to go without service. One of the agency's field offices had hired temporary staff to offer basic services during the LSIE. One day was suggested for any other LSIEs in the future. One research participant would rather there be no LSIE, and, if there must be, then "let it be for a half a day." Another research participant stated:

> Just don't make it three days in a row. Because three days to absorb all that is being given to you, taught to you, shared with you, was just a lot! So maybe not three days back to back.

Internal Follow-up Survey

The client organization surveyed 187 persons and published its results approximately eight months after the LSIE on matters related to the LSIE and the follow-up activities. On a statement, "Multiple-day agency wide meetings are useful," 31% of the respondents strongly agreed or just agreed compared to 55% who disagreed or strongly disagreed. Strongly disagreed was selected by 29% compared with 5% who strongly agreed. The remaining 14% gave either invalid responses or "don't know" (source excluded as it would reveal the identity of the client organization). One research participant summarized the situation at the client organization like this:

> I am working with people who volunteered. They are pretty optimistic that things can change. But, outside that group, the majority of what I hear has been negative. Things like the event was a waste of time, and why do we do these things?

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

Nine months after the LSIE, the research participants still remembered the event. The LSIE had resulted in an acceleration of some changes. It can be said that the information gathered during the event led to a better understanding of internal and external customers.

The time spent (three days) on the LSIE was considered to be too long, and the research participants would have preferred a shorter period. LSIEs should focus more on gathering and delivering information rather than formulating strategic plans.

A power base that will endure over time in an organization should be identified and targeted for implementation of organizational change. In this case, the management team should have been involved more in the planning and the execution of the LSIE. The management team was considered more permanent than the "genuine, but transient" executive team.

Most of the changes that occurred in this organization would have occurred with or without the LSIE. The changes that occurred as a direct result of the LSIE were considered "cosmetic" by some research participants.

From this study it was found that the value of holding an LSIE lies in the information that is collected. The participants are able to give information more freely in an LSIE. It is important to analyze and use that information properly. It is also possible to use LSIEs to deliver information (such as policy matters) to a wider audience in a participative manner.

OD consultants planning on using LSIEs should spend more time on the implementation phase following the LSIE rather than assuming that change will be achieved during the event. Information collected during an LSIE can be overwhelming to the client organization and help is needed to analyze the information and arrange it in a meaningful and useful form. When internal OD does not exist, an external OD consultant should plan on spending more time to help with follow-up activities. Planning for follow-up activities is as important as the planning for the LSIE itself. OD consultants should anticipate the problems organizations may encounter and coach the leaders accordingly.

Much more research is needed, using a wide variety of LSIEs in a range of organizational types. Another possibility is to research organizations long after the LSIE to document the impact of LSIEs on the operations of an organization. The ongoing research into this organization will provide one set of longitudinal results.

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